A WORKBOOK FOR EDUCATORS

"Oregon's vision for education is that every child achieves academic success. Proficiency-based education is vital to our efforts. *It's About Time* is an indispensable tool for Oregon and the nation to make substantial progress on this journey of profound change."

John A. Kitzhaber, M.D., Governor of the State of Oregon

IT'S ABOUT TIME

A FRAMEWORK FOR PROFICIENCY-BASED TEACHING & LEARNING

by **DIANE SMITH** for the

BUSINESS EDUCATION COMPACT

BEC

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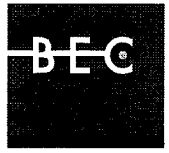
It's About Time

A Framework for Proficiency-based Teaching & Learning



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Foreword

Since its founding in 1984 as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, the Business Education Compact (BEC) has embraced a strategy that links educational reform, economic development and workforce requirements through productive partnerships between business and education. In 2003 it launched the Teaching and Learning Initiative with an advisory team that included leaders at all levels of the education community. After supporting a partner school piloting credit by proficiency, the BEC began its journey in spreading proficiency-based teaching and learning across Oregon schools. As of year-end 2011, more than 2,500 teachers in 119 of Oregon's 197 school districts have been trained by the BEC.

About the Business Education Compact

The BEC is a non-profit organization investing in quality education since 1984. In fulfilling our mission—"Make Learning Real"—we connect students with their future and give teachers tools to create enthusiastic, lifelong learners. Programs include paid internships for high school and college students; National Engineers Month that stimulates student excitement for science and math; and the Teaching & Learning Initiative that is transforming K-12 education and improving student outcomes through proficiency-based teaching and learning.

The framework shared in this workbook fills a need expressed to the BEC by the Oregon Department of Education (ODE). ODE asked the BEC to define proficiency so there is consistency in the practice and fidelity in the measurement of results of student learning. It is designed to inform and support teachers, students, administrators and school board members who are willing to take bold steps to transform their classrooms, schools and districts so that all students' needs are met for them to be successful.

The BEC has focused its efforts on changing the very nature of teaching through proficiency practice. In proficiency-based teaching and learning classrooms, students move on only when they can demonstrate they know and can apply the core standards. Raising the bar on learning means it also must be raised for teaching. This workbook provides the framework for implementing sustainable and effective proficiency-based teaching and learning practices.

Foundation funding for an independent evaluator provided the BEC with necessary resources for ground-breaking research and evaluation that validates the effectiveness of proficiency practice. Across Oregon—from rural schools to urban schools, from small schools to large comprehensive high schools—the results are consistent: high gains in student achievement and success!

For instance, here are examples from three Oregon schools:

- After one year of proficiency-based teaching and learning practices by math teachers, Hidden Valley High School in Three Rivers School District/Oregon (school enrollment 756) reported notable gains in the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) in math. In 2009-10, 62% of juniors met or exceeded achievement standards. In 2010-11, 81% of juniors and 63% of sophomores met or exceeded. The percentage of juniors is 11% higher than the state average and a 19% increase over 2009-10. They also reduced the percentage of freshmen with Fs by 68%, primarily in Algebra I classes.

- Early College High School, an alternative school in the Salem-Keizer School District (school enrollment 198) reported that 60% of their students met or exceeded standards measured by OAKS in math in 2009-10. One year later, 95% met or exceeded with 100% participation.

- Heppner Jr/Sr High School, Morrow County School District (school enrollment 213) reduced the number of failing grades for all students from 143 Ds and Fs at the end of the first semester in 2009-10 to 26 Fs and no Ds at the end of the first semester in 2010-11.

Proficiency has been fueled by a grassroots movement to transform teaching and learning in Oregon. Through this practice, classroom teachers are experiencing more professional satisfaction as they witness the growth in academic achievement and student ownership of their own learning. These teachers vow that they will never go back to traditional classroom teaching. As one veteran teacher so succinctly stated, "proficiency offers hope for those students who have given up trying to be successful in school."

The BEC Board and staff are humbled and inspired by the hard work and bold determination of so many teachers and administrators we are proud to call *partners in change* as they implement proficiency in their classrooms and schools. This book is for them and others yet to join us in our journey to ensure proficiency-based teaching and learning practices are implemented in every classroom, every school and every district in Oregon.

To view other proficiency resources developed by the BEC such as a proficiency portal (a document library of proficiency material for classrooms), please visit our website at www.becpdx.org.

Tamra Busch-Johnsen
Executive Director
Business Education Compact

Introduction

It's About Time—A Framework for Proficiency-based Teaching & Learning

It's about time! It's about time that we make changes in our K-12 education system to ensure that a high school diploma will at last be a reliable predictor of post-academic success. It's about time that we give each and every student the time to learn with the help they need to be successful. It's about time that we assess students based on what they know and can do instead of how long they sit in a classroom chair. It's about time that grades accurately reflect student knowledge and skills!

America's classrooms reflect a place where time truly marches on. In fact, time dictates many of the learning decisions that drive how schools function. For example, students who were born during a certain time period start school together; classes, units and grading periods all start and stop for large groups of students based on dates on a calendar instead of when students master the material. And students move through the school system in instructional groups with time limiting the personalization of instruction and curriculum to meet students' needs.

Time **is** an important feature for some activities, such as having students complete statewide assessments within an identified testing period, or scheduling important school-related activities. Parents also expect that schools will train students to meet deadlines and work within a schedule. And a student-centered performance model frequently encourages students with common interests to work together to complete a quality task under set deadlines. These are all worthwhile tasks with time as an important ingredient. We can't afford, however, to continue the long-standing educational practice of allowing time to drive all of our educational decisions.

Proficiency-based teaching and learning allows a teacher to set aside many of the time barriers that prevent some students from having extra time to learn tough concepts and other students from moving ahead at a faster pace. Proficiency defines what it means to master a learning concept by breaking it down into manageable chunks of knowledge and skills and giving students all the support and interventions necessary for them to reach, at a minimum, a proficient level of learning.

It's About Time is written for teachers, students and school leaders. The framework described in this workbook defines the critical elements of proficiency-based teaching and learning through a series of teacher and student rubrics. Designed around "constructs" that are essential to quality teaching and learning, the rubrics are designed to be accessed in any order. This is particularly important since practices like identifying learning targets and assessing student knowledge occur frequently during the learning process.

Teachers can use the framework to self-evaluate where they are on the continuum of mastering proficiency skills and create goals for self-improvement. Teams of teachers can study the elements and identify where their grade level team or department needs to improve and develop a plan to get there, as well as evaluate how effectively their students are engaged in their own learning, as identified in the rubrics. Administrators can support teachers by studying the framework and looking for elements of proficiency when they visit classrooms. The rubrics help point out the critical features of proficiency-based practices and provide a structure for conversations with parents and students about changes in classroom practices that are likely to occur, as well as fostering ongoing dialogue with all stakeholders. In addition, administrators can recommend their teachers collaborate on how to improve professional skills and move through the continuum of proficiency talents that these rubrics support.

The proficiency transformation is rising up across Oregon and emanates from the classroom as opposed to the legislature, principals' offices or school boards. It brings with it the promise of improving teacher effective-

ness and dramatically increasing student learning. It also comes with labels—labels that can be confusing to parents, students and community stakeholders, not to mention practitioners and our higher education partners. This practice is known by many different terms: proficiency-based teaching and learning, standards-based education, performance-based practices, competency-based pathways and many more. Regardless of its nomenclature, we owe teachers a clear set of components that distinguish the classroom "must haves" from the "nice to haves." We invite you to join our journey!

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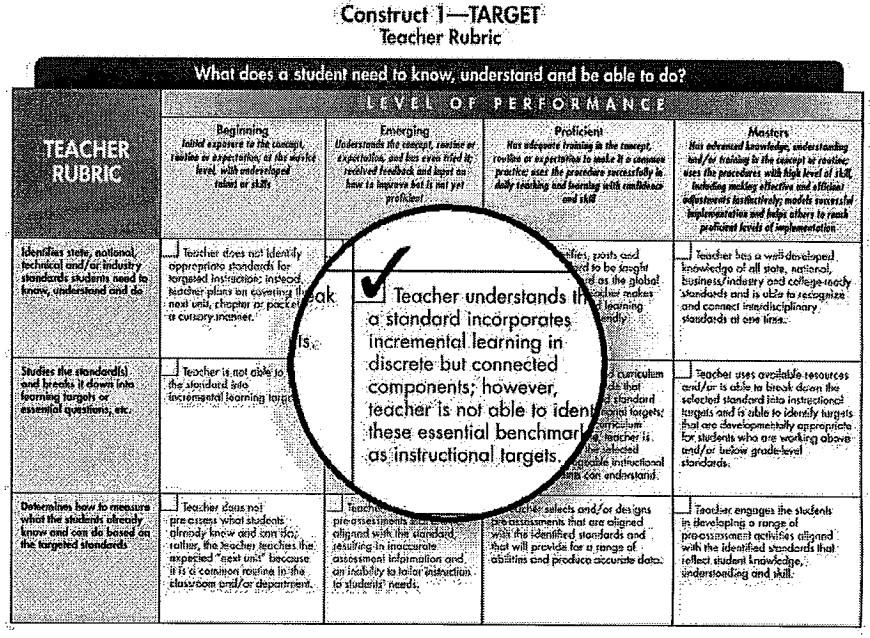
We expect you to write all over this book—it's a workbook, after all.

As you proceed through *It's About Time*, you'll come upon Construct Rubrics that set performance goals. We've designed them with check boxes for you to document your progress.



Construct 1—TARGET
Teacher Rubric

What does a student need to know, understand and be able to do?

TEACHER RUBRIC	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE			
	Beginning *Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills*	Emerging *Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient*	Proficient *Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill*	Masters *Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation*
Identifies state, national, technical and/or industry standards students need to know, understand and do	☐ Teacher does not identify appropriate standards for targeted instruction; instead, teacher plans on covering the next unit, chapter or packet in a cursory manner.	✓ Teacher understands that a standard incorporates incremental learning in discrete but connected components; however, teacher is not able to identify these essential benchmarks as instructional targets.		☐ Teacher has a well-developed knowledge of all state, national, business/industry and college-ready standards and is able to recognize and connect interdisciplinary standards at one time.
Studies the standard(s) and breaks it down into learning targets or essential questions, etc.	☐ Teacher is not able to break the standard into incremental learning targets.			☐ Teacher uses available resources and/or is able to break down the selected standard into instructional targets and is able to identify targets that are developmentally appropriate for students who are working above and/or below grade-level standards.
Determines how to measure what the students already know and can do based on the targeted standards	☐ Teacher does not pre-assess what students already know and can do; rather, the teacher teaches the expected "next unit" because it is a common routine in the classroom and/or department.	☐ Teacher pre-assessments are not aligned with the standard, resulting in inaccurate assessment information and an inability to tailor instruction to students' needs.	☐ Teacher selects and/or designs pre-assessments that are aligned with the identified standards and that will provide for a range of abilities and produce accurate data.	☐ Teacher engages the students in developing a range of pre-assessment activities aligned with the identified standards that reflect student knowledge, understanding and skill.

Scenarios

Teachers learn from one another, whether by collaborating on lesson development or watching each other teach the lesson. The following scenarios reflect what proficiency-based teaching and learning can look like in classrooms at the elementary, middle and high school levels. Teachers are encouraged to consider what proficiency elements their students need, how to sustain these practices after implementation, and what support system is needed at the classroom, department and building levels to maintain progress in implementing proficiency for all students.

Scenario: Intermediate Reading—Grades 4-5 Reading Standards

Beth Smith has wanted to be an elementary teacher all of her life. She loves this age group and cherishes each minute she is with her students. When Beth was in school, elementary teachers were hired to teach a specific grade level, such as first grade or third grade, etc. Beth's school focuses on standards as the learning targets for each student. The faculty recognizes that not all students learn at the same speed and that time should not hold students back from achieving strong learning.

One of the ways that Beth's school reflects this fluid approach to teaching is the way teachers spend their day. Instead of being hired to teach a particular grade level, teachers are hired to provide instruction in a range of content-area district and state standards. Teachers are also incorporating the common core state standards in reading and math. In this way, similar to the "looping" strategy, teachers can move students along a learning continuum that does not expect them to learn at the same speed as every other student. Beth is responsible for teaching the fourth and fifth grade reading standards at her elementary school. This is not the only subject area she teaches; she also teaches the fourth and fifth grade social studies and math standards. This means that she sees a wide range of students in a day and that students are not self-contained in her room exclusively for their instruction. While the school has a "home room" model, it is expected that even the primary students follow a "walk to learn" model where they are grouped with students who are working to reach a proficient level or higher in the same standards.

Beth's district developed a scope and sequence for reading based on the state and common core state standards. The scope and sequence breaks each of the reading standards down into learning targets and provides an instructional order that helps students be successful. The document also spells out the vocabulary that is unique to reading that teachers are expected to use during their instruction, as well as the resources that the district has provided that cover the specific targets.

The scope and sequence focuses on five major areas of reading: Phonemic Awareness, Decoding, Fluency, Comprehension and Vocabulary. Each of these areas builds on the next. The goal of the district is to make sure that students are strong independent readers by the time they master third grade reading standards. (Note: Students who are not reading at grade level by the end of third grade will typically struggle to become independent readers.) This means that, as a teacher who focuses on the fourth and fifth grade reading standards, Beth's students should come to her already knowing how to decode and read with a fluent cadence. Students who have mastered fourth grade reading standards may still need to focus on phonemic awareness, decoding and fluency standards. These will be addressed by other teachers who deliver in-depth interventions to students who are not on a solid learning trajectory.

Reading is a major instructional focus at Beth's school and, as a result, there are many interventions in place to help students reach proficiency. Teachers take a proactive approach to grouping students on this learning continuum. They study available scientific research about grouping and, in weekly placement meetings, teacher teams and content coaches review a student's learning profile and determine whether a move to a different

teacher's room is warranted. Students are comfortable moving among teachers and soon gain a sense that each teacher is a member of their "teacher family," helping to support their learning and providing a broad range of support and advancement.

When Beth is ready to design a unit, she references the scope and sequence as a place to start. She knows that reading standards build on one another and need to be addressed multiple times during the year. She also knows that there is an instructional order to the reading standards that helps students reach proficiency and that the district and school resources will help her create a broad range of learning activities. Beth's district has also developed common formative and summative reading assessments that measure each grade-level reading standard. These common assessments are stored electronically on the district's server and are available for Beth to retrieve and administer to any student she believes is ready for one. The questions on the assessments come from a bank of research-based reading questions, including those from the adopted core and intervention programs her district uses, as well as those teachers have developed and refined through use.

To know whether a student is proficient in a reading standard or not, teachers developed a set of rubrics that define a range of proficiency. Teachers refer to these rubrics many times, using them with parents at conferences to explain how their student is doing in learning to read, as well as using them to report student learning on the student's report card. As students begin to understand what is expected of them to be successful, students also use the rubrics to understand why they missed the mark and what they need to do to improve their learning next time.

Comprehension is one of the areas that Beth will focus on with her students. The district's intermediate teachers discussed what the standard required a student to know and to do, and they collectively reviewed a great deal of research on the teaching of reading. Then, after confirming that they were all on the same page about what comprehension is, how to measure it, and what it means to be proficient in comprehension, the teachers developed a series of grade-level rubrics that reflect a continuum of knowledge and skills. The district's rubrics are on a 6-point scale, with a 4 being proficient. This is the district's fourth grade comprehension rubric:

	1—Does Not Meet Proficiency in the Standard	2—Does Not Meet Proficiency in the Standard	3—Nearly Meets Proficiency in the Standard
4th Grade Comprehension Rubric	Even with support, unable to interpret information from grade-level text, including cause and effect, fact and opinion, sequence of events	Needs support to interpret information from grade-level text, including cause and effect, fact and opinion, sequence of events	Inconsistently interprets information from grade-level text, including cause and effect, fact and opinion, sequence of events
	4—Meets Proficiency in the Standard	**5—Exceeds Proficiency in the Standard**	**6—Masters the Standard**
	Accurately interprets information from grade-level text, including cause and effect, fact and opinion, sequence of events	Accurately and consistently interprets information from grade-level text, including cause and effect, fact and opinion, sequence of events	Independently applies well-developed comprehension skills to above-grade-level texts

After collecting assessment information for her students on their comprehension ability, Beth develops a range of activities that suits each student's personalized learning plan. The learning plans reflect a thoughtful strategic and intentional focus for each student that will help them reach proficiency in this fourth grade standard. Some activities have students working in the basal program; other activities have them strengthening their comprehension skills by completing reading-related activities in their health newspaper and their social studies reader. Regardless of the content, Beth addresses the need for understanding what the text is saying, interpreting the information and developing cause/effect relations, opinions and the ability to sequence events.

During the activities, students track their progress using their learning plans. The activities include assessments that are used by other teachers to measure comprehension. In addition, a district-wide elementary reading assessment program is used that offers a range of reading passages that quickly reflect a student's comprehension ability. After reviewing all assessment scores and the comprehension rubric, Beth makes an overall evaluation on each student's comprehension ability and records this on the student's standards-based elementary report card.

When parents get this information, they are also provided a complete comprehension rubric from kindergarten standards through fifth grade standards. Teachers hope this will help parents understand that scoring a student's ability to comprehend the printed text will give them a more accurate picture of their student's true ability. In addition, parents can look at the whole continuum of comprehension across the elementary years and understand how much growth their student has made to date and should make in the future.

Scenario: Seventh Grade Science Standards

Ms. Garcia teaches middle school science standards to seventh graders. Her middle school is on a semester system and classes are 56 minutes long. Ms. Garcia has six sections of students. Most of them are working to be proficient in seventh grade science standards; however, some of them have advanced science ability and are working on eighth grade standards. The smallest class has approximately 26 students and the largest section has 34 students.

Ms. Garcia's department spends a great deal of time identifying the structure of middle school science. Together the department members created a scope and sequence that outlines the order in which the standards are covered. Part of their design plan includes ensuring that much of the content of the state assessment test is covered in depth by the time the students are scheduled to complete the test.

The scope and sequence identifies the standards teachers will teach and breaks them down into units throughout the year. Each unit addresses specific science standards that are unique to a particular science concept. Other standards are addressed within each unit, appearing multiple times during the year. This happens because the teachers have identified some standards that are generic to any specific content and that shape the way students need to think as scientists. Reviewing some of the science standards more than once gives the teachers many opportunities to hit some of the really critical science concepts that students will need to know in order to be successful with eighth grade science standards.

Ms. Garcia's science department spends time breaking down each science standard into learning targets. These learning targets are really chunks of knowledge and skills that teachers will teach and for which students will be held accountable. The learning targets are written in the form of *I Can* statements so they can be easily understood by the students. For example, one of the seventh grade standards for Ms. Garcia's class deals with how the components and processes within a system interact with one another. Under this standard there are five learning targets. When the students demonstrate the *I Can* statements associated with a particular target, then they are proficient in the learning target. When they are proficient in all of the learning targets, they are proficient in the standard.

Here are examples of the *I Can* statements for the learning target that reads: "Explain how landforms change over time at various rates in terms of constructive and destructive forces."

Strategic and Systemic Implementation of Proficiency

In Oregon, it is teachers who are advancing the implementation of proficiency in K-12 classrooms. Some say it is an initiative that is teacher generated and administrator supported. In order to ensure that teaching to a level of personalized mastery is a sustainable practice in a district, a number of important elements need to be addressed. This framework is intended to define the essential elements that teachers and students exhibit in a classroom that successfully uses proficiency-based teaching and learning.

One cannot ignore the confusion that exists as a result of the many terms currently used to define this set of practices. Among the terms currently found in policy and research to describe proficiency-based teaching and learning are the following: competency-based, performance-based, standards-based, personalized learning, proficiency-based and more. While it is a worthwhile task to crosswalk similarities among all of these terms, they all have one goal in common: improved student achievement.

As proficiency spreads to more and more schools, misinformation about what it is gets perpetuated and a wide range of terms are used to describe the same practice. Paramount to successful implementation is the need to decide on a single term to define the practice, or at the least to define what it looks like.

We are learning that teachers believe that the use of these strategies significantly improves their teaching as well. During many interviews, teachers have shared that proficiency practices are something that they wish they had learned earlier in their teaching careers. Many affirmed they will never return to the more traditional ways of teaching that had them working independently in their silos, being regimented content-delivery specialists who measured student learning against a calendar or clock.

Today's teachers understand that their classrooms are already tied to standards. Classrooms have reflected this focus since states began defining their curriculum and linking content to state assessment tests. Robert Marzano makes a significant distinction between "standards-referenced" and "standards-based." It is important to understand the difference so we don't become idle instructors who let the standards-referenced environment just exist, expecting that acknowledging that standards are in place is enough to "make something happen."

Students advance through a "standards-referenced system" based on their grade level (Marzano), moving from one grade to the next in batches dictated by their date of birth (Robinson). Time is flexible in a "standards-based system" and students advance based on identified criteria that reflect a proficient level of knowledge and skills in identified areas. Available interventions and guidelines that spell out performance levels are integral in helping teachers make decisions that lead to students making optimum academic gains. A standards-based classroom environment significantly increases a student's opportunity to master material and sustain knowledge over a longer period of time.

Proficiency-based teaching and learning occurs naturally in a standards-based classroom. The standards are clearly the learning targets and teachers are purposeful about holding students accountable for them. In a proficiency-based classroom, however, standards are broken down into achievable chunks of learning that, collectively, reflect the selected standards. Clear criteria are in place that students understand, and often help write. They spell out the proficient level of knowledge and skills they are expected to reach. Interventions and support services ranging from mini-tutorials to full-scale double-dosing of content instruction are in place for students who need additional time to reach proficiency. Students can also advance to a deeper level of learning or to the next standard without regard for the date on the calendar that indicates whether or not it is the end of the term. In addition, teachers measure and report student academic performance separately from personal management skills, frequently called career-readiness skills. As a result, students and parents know a student's

true academic ability and, while we appreciate hard-working students who have been labeled "teacher pleasers," these attractive behaviors do not cloud the true picture of a student's academic ability.

Teachers report that implementing proficiency practices is most successful when they work with a team from their department, grade level, and school or across the district. Working as a single teacher delivering the entire scope of, let's say, math content in a small rural school creates inherent problems with sustainability. While initial efforts to implement proficiency might be successful, sustainability requires a team and systemic effort. Teachers and principals must collaborate to develop policy and practices that are in the best interest of students and support all students working to achieve high standards.

When a parent whose "A" student suddenly comes home with a "C" on a report card, there needs to be a clear and consistent message from the school that addresses what the grade stands for and how it was earned. When a district rolls out proficiency district-wide, teachers appreciate that the critical work of designing instruction with clear targets and well-structured assessments, as well as measuring and reporting student achievement is a shared mission. Together, teacher teams and administrators align their proficiency work and are in agreement in all critical areas that improve student academic performance.

So where does a district begin to tackle the strategic and systemic issues that support successful implementation of proficiency practices? Let's take a look at few of those issues and how they relate to the day-to-day operations of a district.

Creating a Mindset for Change

Districts that want to undertake a K-12 reform effort to implement proficiency-based practices must first ask whether members of each key stakeholder group are on board and ready to undertake a multi-year communication plan. This is important to help others understand and buy into a shift in thinking about how best to serve students. Districts can undertake a strong campaign to make something happen, but without the support of stakeholder groups, nothing happens that is sustainable.

The BEC is proposing that schools make a permanent change in how we design and deliver instruction, as well as how we grade, assess, evaluate and report student achievement. This involves shaking up the fundamental core of education and moving forward in areas where we are now able to make significant changes to improve student achievement. A district's ability to make such a shift depends on establishing a strong culture of routinely looking at all available data. This includes studying student performance on formative and summative assessments in order to make effective changes in planning and instruction practices.

There are four critical questions that districts must be able to answer:

- What do our students know?
- How do we know that they know it?
- What do we do if they don't know it?
- What do we do if they already know it?

Implementing proficiency-based teaching and learning provides teachers, students and parents the answers to these most fundamental questions. Creating a mindset for change allows this implementation to occur.

School Board

The school board sets district policy. They need to lead major changes in instruction and assessment and mitigate any conflicts that would prevent the district from moving forward with proficiency-based practices. This is critical because moving from a time-based system to a proficiency-based system can send ripples throughout an entire educational community. Making such a change may result in needing to revise current policy or to create new policies. Together with district specialists, board members can ask the tough questions that help lay a solid foundation with the community at large. Two major areas appear to need careful consideration by school boards, with research-based input from district leadership and community. These include the school calendar and grading practices.

and Thursday tutorials might be with English and social studies teachers. Departments are responsible for rotating coverage in the tutorial lab and all teachers who show up on a scheduled day can access information off of the department server to learn where students may need help.

Consider whether all staff members need to start school at the same time. Could you create learning labs that are open earlier in the morning or later in the afternoon or evening if you staggered staff hours? This type of flexibility is hard to create when we are "doing the work of school." It is similar to that adage about repairing the plane while flying it. Student-centered use of space can only be created through a free-flowing conversation with staff about how to think outside the box, how to do their job differently, how to serve the students' current needs in an environment more in line with what they need instead of having their needs fit the services we have too long provided.

Use of Data

Whether districts are struggling to find enough revenue to sustain existing programs, or whether they have no budget woes, it is important to base decisions that affect the learning environment of students on all available data. There is a public call for equity and a focus on the achievement gap that clearly requires that all data be considered when making changes in how students are served.

Teachers are collecting classroom data, as well as student performance data on state assessments, to design personalized learning. They collaborate as part of building or department teams to learn whether each student has access to every resource needed to be successful. When teachers are using proficiency-based practices, new data points surface and need to be collected, studied and used to improve the learning environment.

As part of collaborative teams, teachers learn which students are proficient in identified standards, which students need additional interventions to reach proficient levels of knowledge and skills, and which students are ready for advanced or accelerated coursework. Through a close review of programs and services, teachers may discover that not all services are available to every student. This discovery creates a need to redesign or adjust the instructional delivery model.

Like teachers, districts use data to make changes that lead to increased student achievement. Studying what the data says is especially critical when districts take on implementing proficiency district-wide. Recognizing that the gap is widening between low and high-achieving students is frequently at the center of implementing proficiency-based practices. A close review of why this is happening requires dedicated time for district and building leaders, as well as teachers and support staff, to come together to discuss what the data says, reflect on what needs to be done to address problem areas identified by the data review and make decisions that lead to improved learning environments for each student. After a short period of time and involvement in reviewing data regularly, teachers become continuous learners and districts make solid progress in helping each student reach proficient levels or higher.

Holding Students Accountable

One of the most important cultural shifts that occurs when districts implement proficiency-based teaching and learning is the crucial practice of holding students accountable. This far-reaching practice affects everyone, from the school board and district office to the classroom, students and parents. Moving to a system where students are held accountable to reach a proficient level of knowledge and skills should be phased in gradually with solid communication and problem-solving among all stakeholders.

In such a system, students will no longer pass simply because they have accumulated enough points to kick their grade up from an F to a D, or move their B grade up to an A. From one teacher to another, one content area to another, everyone expects students to reach for high levels of learning, to work hard, to do their best, to take advantage of all opportunities to learn and to understand that school is not a place where one can get by on just good behavior or a strong athletic profile. When a district expects students to demonstrate high levels of knowledge and skills in adopted standards, and creates an educational environment that supports this culture, a powerful thing happens: people think it can actually happen! Students

want to succeed; parents want to know that the grade students earn is not clouded with non-academic factors. And community members feel part of a hard-working team that expects all students to learn.

When teachers include student behavior factors in the evaluation of student learning, parents receive an artificially skewed report of what the student knows and can do. There are eight identified personal management traits that teachers frequently consider, and occasionally assign points to, when determining a student's grade in a class. They include the following: attendance, attitude, behavior, do-overs, efforts, extra credit, late work and homework. While these components of school success are important, they can be measured and reported separately on the report card and transcript.

Instead of diluting the true picture of what students know and can do, teachers must help each student reach proficient levels of knowledge and skills and measure their progress through the use of well-developed formative and summative assessments. These assessments should align to the standards being measured, and be constructed in a way that allows the teacher to measure a continuum of learning. In this way, teachers know which students are not yet proficient and which students are ready for enrichment, advanced work, or even ready to move to the next set of standards, possibly in a different course. Solid, well-constructed formative and summative assessments provide a clear picture of student learning and reduce the dependence on the calendar as the unit by which we determine if a student is "on track."

Hope for the Future

So, what factors do districts that take on this level of system-wide academic accountability face? First, districts need to celebrate their successes. While some schools have moved to proficiency-based practices because their academic data reflected poor achievement results, all districts have many things they can point to that they do well. Students have been learning and graduating from their schools for many years. Why would successful districts take on a change to proficiency-based practices?

To improve how they serve all students! To provide all students with a successful pathway toward college and career success! And to develop a solid partnership with students that is based on a success plan for all, with clear learning targets, strong assessments, accurate evaluations of student academic achievement, and flexible pacing that provides a continuum of learning when students are ready to move on, without the barrier of time. Proficiency-based teaching and learning practices lay out clear pathways and definitions about what students need to learn and how well they need to learn it. These practices set aside time as the parameter for measuring learning and, instead, offer students supported opportunities to excel. Holding students accountable to demonstrate proficiency in content standards and process skills creates a transparent academic bar that students can reach, and even exceed, with hard work and access to support systems districts create and offer.

Districts must also develop and nurture strong partnerships with the parent and business communities. Embracing a solid proficiency-based teaching and learning environment requires effective dialogue with those who don't understand the shift to standards and what it means to hold students accountable for reaching proficient levels of knowledge and skills. Parents understand what they know and, while even the strongest advocate and high school alum can sing a district's praises, confusion still exists over changes that they don't understand.

Administrator and teacher teams can develop information sessions to be shared frequently in a variety of venues. Parents and students need to see compelling data from other districts, to hear administrators, teachers, and particularly students and parents from other districts tell their stories and share their successes. While many educational initiatives have come and gone, some with even short-term positive results, how we deliver school has been stagnating for decades. Systemic and sustaining change only comes about through genuine partnerships that embrace all concerns, look at all data and research, and clearly has students' best interests at the heart of every decision.

Questions and Answers for Implementing Proficiency-based Teaching and Learning

Q: Is proficiency-based teaching and learning based on research?

A: Yes, many have said that proficiency-based teaching and learning is simply using what research has already identified as best practice. Teachers who visit the classrooms of those using proficiency-based practices have reported that what they see when they watch these teachers interacting with students is simply a collection of transparent, clearly-focused lessons that are supported by sound grading practices. They report that students have a high level of engagement, that they track their own learning progress and that they are very well-versed in what learning targets they have mastered and those that still need work. Teachers report that the learning environment does not feel like a checklist with students just working down a list of things to get done. Rather, learning feels connected, solid and well-established for long-term retrieval and application.

Q: How many states have similar practices in place?

A: All 50 states have elements of proficiency-based practices in place. Some of them call their initiatives by other names; however, reviewing the major components of classroom applications, there are many essential elements that are common across all 50 states. This includes private programs, online learning providers and charter schools.

Q: What are the most common factors found across all of the different models of implementation?

A: The most common factors include the following:

- Learning is constant and is dictated by student needs instead of the clock, calendar or curriculum; time is a variable factor that can be manipulated to help students reach proficiency;
- A focus on district, state and common core state standards as the learning targets students will be held accountable to demonstrate;
- Defined levels of proficiency laid out on a learning continuum that are used to identify baseline ability and that reflect a range of continuous learning in sequential order;
- Integration of technology as a powerful learning and assessment tool, including online collaboration of teacher-to-student and student-to-student contact, as well as student-created demonstrations of learning;
- Clear grading practices that distinguish between academic achievement and personal management skills;
- Teachers as facilitators of learning and students engaging in shaping learning experiences and taking ownership of what they know and are expected to learn.

Q: Is proficiency-based teaching and learning exclusively for secondary students who are earning credit?

A: No, proficiency is well-suited for classrooms from K-20! In fact, primary classrooms naturally use this model to help students move through a learning continuum when they have mastered certain skills and are ready for the next skills in a sequence. Students instinctively adjust easily to moving through a continuum of standards as they reach proficient levels or higher. No one wants to be held back when they are ready to move on, just as no student wants to move on without having learned what is needed to be successful in the next unit.

Q: Does the business community support proficiency-based teaching and learning?

A: Based on initial discussions with the business members of the BEC Board of Directors, the business community enthusiastically endorses this performance-based approach for education. It mirrors how their employees are evaluated in the workplace, and they are eager to support a diploma that accurately reflects what students know and can do, with strong career-readiness skills.

Q: How does proficiency support equity in the educational environment?

A: Proficiency ensures equity on many levels for all elementary, middle and high school students. It ensures an appropriately challenging curriculum with opportunities for advancement when ready, and remediation with support when needed. It offers full access to learning with no artificial barriers built in by the clock, calendar or school structure. It eliminates the traditional practice of achieving mastery for only the advanced students who learn concepts quickly before the clock indicates to the teacher that it may be time to move on to the next unit. Providing equitable access to mastery should be the goal of every educational program. Proficiency-based teaching and learning delivers a full array of services to every student sub-population every day.

Q: Does proficiency-based teaching and learning depend on which instructional material teachers use?

A: No. State and national common core state standards are the instructional foci in classrooms. All instructional material, whether in print, media or online form, is used to support students in reaching proficiency. Instructional material is not the primary source of instruction. As teachers break down the standards into manageable learning targets, they should do a crosswalk with all available instructional material and determine which components will best benefit students.

Q: How can secondary students earn credit by proficiency?

A: Students can earn credit by proficiency when they demonstrate what they know and can do in any of three different ways:

- In-class model: Students work to show proficient levels of knowledge and skills or higher in the classroom. When they demonstrate this, the grade is earned and the credit is transcripted. Neither the clock nor the calendar dictates how much time this may take. However, districts find that they must structure a strong support system for students to reach proficiency to avoid having students take so much time on one learning target that they fail to complete a course. In addition, students must understand that learning and hard work don't stop when they reach proficiency. They need to reach for levels of advanced understanding and application.

- Out-of-class model: Students work to show proficient levels of knowledge and skills or higher outside of class. They frequently work with a teacher facilitator who helps define the standards that must be met. Students meet regularly with the teacher facilitator to check in and confirm that they understand the learning targets correctly and that their work is moving them closer to proficiency. Time does not dictate how long this may take; however, just as with the in-class model, districts may set some parameters for students to complete their task within reasonable and supported limits.

- Prior learning model: Some students arrive at school doors with a significant amount of prior knowledge and skills. When assessed, their talents may clearly reflect mastery of the required standards that teachers expect them to learn. Teachers may create proficiency-based classes when students who exhibit prior learning are identified and are ready to demonstrate knowledge and skills at a proficient level. Because the newly designed course will be proficiency-based, and students already have the content knowledge and skills necessary to demonstrate the standards for the course at a proficient level, there is no minimum number of students who must "formally" enroll in the class. This option can be offered for only one student.

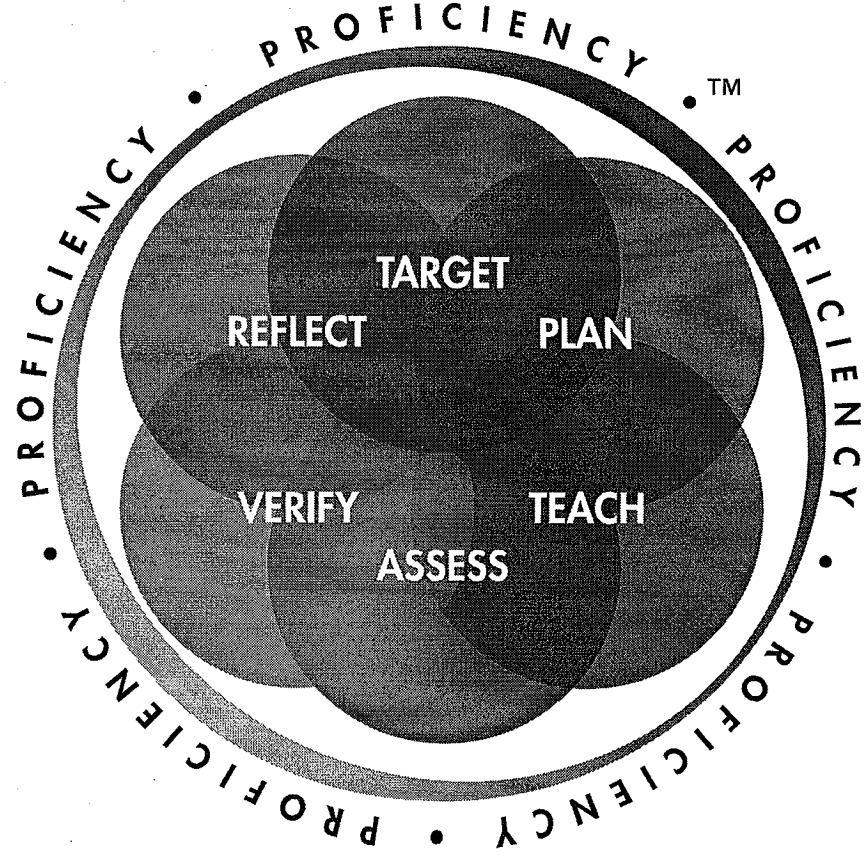
Proficiency-based Teaching and Learning Process™

Personalizing Education
Serving Students' Learning Needs

Achieving a proficient level of knowledge and skills in anything demands considerable commitment and effort. Whether in the classroom, on a sports court or fulfilling a personal objective, we must identify the target, design a course of action and move forward with a personalized plan. Periodically along the way, we need to stop, check in on how we're doing and recalibrate our course. Then, with the target clearly ahead, we continue to gain momentum, improving with every step and using all available resources to reach our goal. Once there, it's time to do a self-check on what we learned, identify our next steps and reflect on our journey. This model of reaching proficiency occurs many times a day in a classroom. The teacher personalizes the cycle for each student, basing decisions on frequent formative assessments, student interests and needed interventions. Both teachers and students are involved in the teaching and learning process. Each shares a role in carrying out the learning plan.

This diagram reflects the six major components of achieving proficiency: target, plan, teach, assess, verify and reflect. While there appears to be a cyclical nature to moving through them, teachers and students move back and forth between the components based on what the student's plan indicates is needed to reach proficient levels or higher. For example, when a student appears to be struggling, the teacher reassesses, offers interventions and support and helps the student try again. Likewise, when a student has already mastered the target, the teacher confirms this through multiple measures and offers the student opportunities to do in-depth learning or to move on to the next learning target. The calendar, the clock and the curriculum do not drive the learning. Instead, time is removed as a learning barrier and the focus is on helping each student reach proficient levels of knowledge and skills.

The construct sections in this workbook offer an overview of each of the six proficiency components, as well as rubrics that reflect a continuum of



proficiency for both teachers and students. What are your strength areas? Where do you need to make improvement? How can you personalize your teaching to help each student reach proficient levels of knowledge and skills? Get ready to use this workbook to find your strengths, identify your goals and chart a path to proficiency!

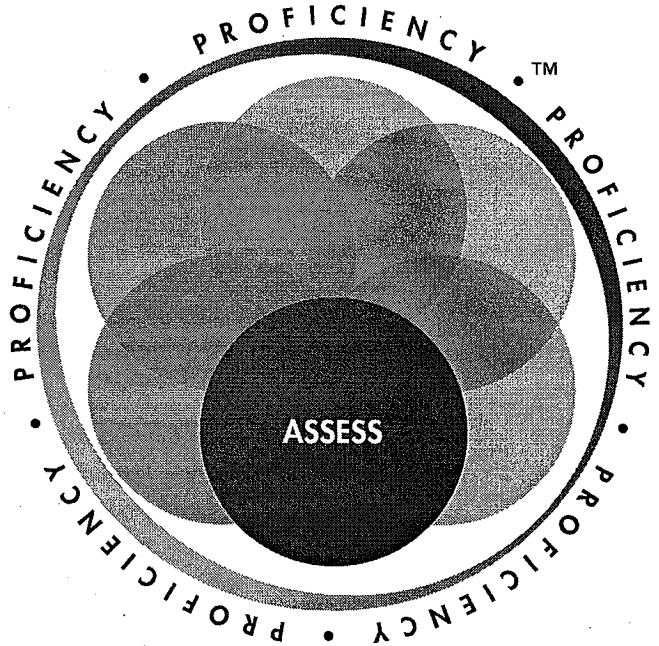
Construct 4—ASSESS

Teacher and Student Rubrics

Teachers ASSESS student learning to determine if students are proficient in the selected standards. Standards may include the national common core state standards, state-identified standards, district-adopted standards or specific industry or certification-related skills sets. In addition, states and districts may identify work ethic or personal student management standards. After defining what it means to be proficient in each of these standards, teachers can use assessment strategies to measure how effectively students take charge of their learning, manage their time and follow directions.

Assessment strategies focus on all identified standards and break them down into manageable learning chunks known as learning targets or *I Can* statements. Teachers use a range of assessment styles and are comfortable with using frequent formative assessments as a method of gaining feedback on what learning pathway is best for each student to reach proficiency. Together with their colleagues, they develop rubrics that reflect descriptions of proficiency along a continuum from *just beginning* to develop knowledge and skills in an area to *mastering knowledge and skills* in that same area. These rubrics are frequently developed with students and are always shared with students prior to any activity or assessment so everyone knows what a proficient level of knowledge and skills looks like and what targets they need to reach.

Teachers share assessment information with students for quick and meaningful updates on how their learning is progressing. They give students a voice in not only self-evaluating their learning progress but also in developing appropriate assessments that accurately and effectively measure identified learning targets. Students then study how assessment results impact their overall personal learning plans. Teachers provide students with assessment information to help them understand in which areas they have made learning growth and in which areas work is still needed. Together with the students, teachers use the assessment information to identify interventions, as well as supplemental programs and material that will help reinforce learning concepts so students make optimum academic growth.



Sufficiency and alignment are critical components in a quality assessment system. Teachers need sufficient information to make a good decision about student proficiency. The decision needs to be based on not only enough information, but the right information to allow a credible judgment about student performance. Teachers should not ask if they have too many or too few tasks or exercises. According to Rick Stiggins, it is important to get "just enough to get a stable estimate of learning, and [that] the tasks cover the learning target(s)... well" (Stiggins, et al., 2006). In addition to having a sufficient amount of evidence to consider in making a judgment about proficiency, it is important that assessments are well-aligned to the standard(s) being measured. Misalignment leads to inaccurate results, which leads to inaccurate evaluations of student performance.

Teachers replace lower scores with higher ones as students learn more. They establish a clear description of what it means to be proficient in a standard. And they compare student work to that description, expecting

that, for some students, additional interventions are necessary to reach proficiency, while other students may be ready to move to the next learning target or dig deeper into related research and application of the standard. Teachers look for multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate proficiency in the standards.

In addition, they include only a student's "best effort" scores in the grade book. This is an important practice to consider adopting when viewing it from the perspective of any learning curve. According to "the power law of learning," the greatest amount of learning occurs during the first few sessions the student studies new material or practices a new skill. As students become more comfortable and familiar with the topic, the learning between sessions diminishes (Newell & Rosenbloom, 1981). Robert Marzano advocates for using the power law to give more weight to the most recent scores a student has earned, believing that they provide a "line of best fit" that reflects more accurately what a student knows and can do (Marzano, 2006). Teachers who enter only the best and most recent scores understand that using the more traditional and convenient method of averaging all the earned scores provides a false message of student knowledge and skills.

Teachers using proficiency-based practices do not factor personal management skills into the academic evaluation of student learning. Personal management skills are assessed separately using a variety of department, building and/or district criteria. As a result, student assessment data is a true reflection of academic performance and does not misrepresent what students know and can do by including non-academic factors like attitude, attendance, behavior or effort.

Students ASSESS their own learning. Whether teachers ask them to be involved in assessing their learning or not, each time a test is returned to them with a low mark on it, they judge themselves to have failed. As a result, they often give up trying. Conversely, when they get an assessment back with a high mark on it, they become more confident and hopeful that this is a trend that reflects a future of true academic success. Students should be involved in the development of the assessments, as well as a discussion about whether the assessments accurately measure the learning targets they have been working toward.

When students are actively involved at this level, they believe they can learn and they work hard to meet goals that they understand and believe are worth the effort. Without this personal commitment to achieve at a high level, students give up and expect (or, at least, accept) failure, low marks and poor grades. Developing a positive assessment role for students requires a solid foundation of support systems, from interventions to acceleration, from independent, student-designed assessments to well-designed group assessments. Once the learning climate includes effective student-centered assessments, students will be ready to participate in and accept peer assessment feedback. Then they will recognize that a broad variety of assessments gives them a clear picture of their learning and what they need to do to reach proficiency in the identified standards.

Construct 4—ASSESS
Teacher Rubric

How can I find out what a student knows, understands and can do?

TEACHER RUBRIC	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE			
	Beginning ***Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills***	**Emerging** ***Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient***	**Proficient** ***Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill***	**Masters** ***Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation***
Distinguishes between the multiple purposes and styles of assessments, particularly the difference between formative and summative assessments	☐ Teacher lacks a foundation in the difference between assessment *for* learning (formative assessment) and assessment *of* learning (summative assessment).	☐ Teacher has a basic understanding of assessments *for* learning and assessments *of* learning; however, teacher does not use this distinction to ensure development of quality assessments.	☐ Teacher recognizes the difference between assessments *for* learning and assessments *of* learning. Teacher intentionally uses this distinction in developing formative and summative assessments.	☐ Teacher uses a highly developed understanding of formative and summative assessments to provide leadership at the department, school or district level, as appropriate.
Designs a variety of valid assessments that are tightly aligned to standards and curricula, as well as industry and certification benchmarks to measure proficient student performance	☐ Teacher does not design or use effective formative and summative assessments. In addition, standards are not at the center of what the assessments measure; nor do the assessments reflect what the teacher uses as the instructional foci.	☐ Teacher is aware that formative and summative assessments should measure selected standards; however, teacher is not able to articulate what the standards require a student to know and do. As a result, assessments do not clearly measure standards, including any industry and certification standards that might be included. Assessments are also not consistent with the instructional foci.	☐ Teacher designs a variety of formative and summative assessments with tight alignment to selected standards and grade levels of learning. Teacher includes appropriate connections to industry and certification standards when appropriate. Formative and summative assessments clearly measure selected targets and are aligned to the correct cognitive level of the standard. Assessments reflect differentiation to support learning styles and levels of proficiency.	☐ Teacher looks for and designs assessment opportunities, frequently with the input and help of students, that reflect projects, application of in-depth thinking and advanced-level skills. Formative and summative assessments clearly measure selected learning targets and offer students opportunities to provide extended thinking and connections to industry activities or advanced levels of curricula.

Construct 4—ASSESS (Cont'd)
Teacher Rubric

How can I find out what a student knows, understands and can do?

TEACHER RUBRIC	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE			
	Beginning *Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills*	**Emerging** *Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient*	**Proficient** *Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill*	**Masters** *Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation*
Creates and uses common rubrics to regularly and reliably measure student performance and provide student feedback on what "proficient" looks like	☐ Teacher does not create or use rubrics to measure student learning. Teacher does not work with colleagues to develop a common understanding of what proficiency looks like through the use of rubrics. Feedback to the students is not based on a description of proficient knowledge and skills in the standards.	☐ Teacher has a basic understanding of rubrics but does not feel comfortable creating or using them to evaluate student learning. Teacher does not see the benefit of having common rubrics that can be used across a grade level or content area. Feedback to students about reaching proficiency is confusing and not well-aligned to the standard.	☐ Teacher participates with a team of teachers to create common rubrics that spell out proficient levels of knowledge and skills. The rubrics provide students a clear description of what they need to know and do to demonstrate proficiency in selected standards. Teacher uses rubrics to provide students feedback about their level of performance and to help them know what they need to do to meet or exceed proficiency.	☐ Teacher models the use of well-developed rubrics and supports students developing rubrics that target standards in an effort to help them internalize and understand how to meet or exceed a proficient level of knowledge and skills.
Creates a rich assessment environment that provides ongoing formal and informal opportunities to measure student learning; measures academic ability from personal management qualities ***NOTE: Non-academic factors could include attendance, attitude, behavior, do-overs, effort, extra credit and homework.***	☐ Teacher does not use any purposeful informal assessment measures and uses high-stakes end-of-unit testing as a summative measure, frequently weighing the impact of the tests significantly more than daily work or other assignments. Teacher includes non-academic factors when measuring and reporting student progress.	☐ Teacher makes an effort to use both formal and informal measures to find out what students know and can do. Frequently the assessments are not aligned with the standards being covered or do not result in an accurate profile of student learning. Teacher wants to separate academic performance from personal management qualities, but is unsure how to do this.	☐ Teacher uses frequent and effective formal and informal measures to find out what students know and can do. Assessments reflect a variety of performance models administered in a variety of ways that give students the best opportunity to demonstrate proficiency. Academic ability is measured separately from personal management qualities. Assessment environment reflects a high degree of student buy-in and an eagerness to find out about performance.	☐ Teacher and students are partners in shaping the assessment culture of the classroom and look for opportunities to measure what students know and can do. Both the formal and informal opportunities are effective, aligned to standards and have a high degree of student buy-in. Teacher develops and communicates high expectations in academic and personal management qualities and measures and reports them separately.

Construct 4—ASSESS (Cont'd)
Teacher Rubric

How can I find out what a student knows, understands and can do?

TEACHER RUBRIC	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE			
	Beginning ***Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills***	**Emerging** ***Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient***	**Proficient** ***Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill***	**Masters** ***Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation***
Includes students in an evaluation of their learning through ongoing knowledge and guidance about assessment results	☐ Teacher creates and operates in a traditional assessment environment with the expectation that student learning is measured through the accumulation of points or assigning of a letter grade without knowledge of what knowledge and skills these grades represent. Teacher does not engage students in self-evaluation, nor a discussion about what needs to be done to meet or exceed proficiency in the standards.	☐ Teacher includes students in an occasional self-evaluation of learning. Teachers provide intermittent feedback that is sketchy and general, without reference to a pathway on how to meet or exceed proficiency. Students can inquire about progress to meet or exceed proficiency.	☐ Teacher establishes a collaborative evaluation culture with students as active stake-holders in evaluating learning. Teacher uses the language of the standards and the rubrics when discussing areas of strength and areas of improvement with students. Teacher encourages students to monitor learning progress and offers support to reach proficiency.	☐ Teacher fosters a strong sense of student ownership for learning and academic achievement. Teacher expects student to independently and continually self-evaluate learning and be prepared to advocate for what is needed to meet or exceed proficiency.

Construct 4—ASSESS (Cont'd)
Student Rubric

How can I monitor my own learning?

STUDENT RUBRIC	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE			
	Beginning *Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills*	**Emerging** *Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient*	**Proficient** *Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill*	**Masters** *Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation*
Recognizes that a broad variety of formal and informal assessments that target the standards can provide a clear picture of knowledge and skills	☐ Student is not aware that assessments can provide a picture of knowledge and skills. Student pursues points and grades as evidence of learning. Student believes that a traditional accumulation of points or assignment of letter grades without a description of student performance is an appropriate reflection of what the student knows and can do.	☐ Student completes a variety of formal and informal assessments but is unsure how to use the results to chart a pathway to academic improvement. Student questions whether the results reflect true knowledge and skills.	☐ Student understands that both formal and informal assessments, completed in a variety of settings and formats, can provide an accurate profile of knowledge and skills. Student uses the assessment results to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement.	☐ Student is eager to complete both formal and informal assessments and looks for as many opportunities as possible to gather information about personal knowledge and skills. Student asks about assessment results and engages in a dialogue with other students and the teacher about what these mean. Student uses assessment results to target areas for additional study and review in order to reach proficiency.
Participates in the development of assessments and evaluation of assessment results	☐ Student does not yet participate in developing assessment options and is not interested in reviewing assessment results in an effort to improve learning.	☐ Student does not want to offer suggestions for assessment options and reluctantly reviews assessment results to evaluate learning.	☐ Student participates in the development of assessments and evaluation of assessment results. Student advocates for personal improvement to meet proficiency as a result of understanding and having a voice in the development of assessments.	☐ Student provides design suggestions for assessments and eagerly looks for feedback about acquired knowledge and skills. Student advocates for strong personal improvement to exceed proficiency through both teacher and student-created assessments.

Construct 4—ASSESS (Cont'd)
Student Rubric

How can I monitor my own learning?

STUDENT RUBRIC	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE			
	Beginning ***Initial exposure to the concept, routine or expectation; at the novice level, with undeveloped talent or skills***	**Emerging** ***Understands the concept, routine or expectation, and has even tried it; received feedback and input on how to improve but is not yet proficient***	**Proficient** ***Has adequate training in the concept, routine or expectation to make it a common practice; uses the procedure successfully in daily teaching and learning with confidence and skill***	**Masters** ***Has advanced knowledge, understanding and/or training in the concept or routine; uses the procedures with high level of skill, including making effective and efficient adjustments instinctively; models successful implementation and helps others to reach proficient levels of implementation***
Uses assessment results to plan learning opportunities that help student meet or exceed proficiency; understands that personal management qualities will not be included in measuring and reporting academic performance	☐ Student does not yet appear interested in assessment results. Student completes a "next step" plan to meet proficiency but reflects little "buy-in" or eagerness to own assessment results. Student does not yet understand the impact of measuring and reporting academic performance separately from personal management qualities.	☐ Student keeps track of assessment results according to classroom expectations. Student participates in a guided conversation about a personalized learning plan and understands that there are "next step" options available to reach proficient levels or higher. Student understands impact of measuring and reporting academic performance separately from personal management qualities.	☐ Student reviews and evaluates assessment results and uses those results to design the next steps in a personal learning plan. Student sets goal to work for high academic performance and personal management qualities.	☐ Student consistently monitors assessment results and knows how to use these results in a personalized learning plan to push towards higher levels of proficiency. Student demonstrates strong commitment to reach high academic levels and well-developed personal management qualities.

EDUCATION—K-12

IT'S ABOUT TIME

It's About Time—A Framework for Proficiency-based Teaching and Learning is a comprehensive resource for all educators wanting to implement proficiency-based teaching and learning from the board room to the classroom. This user-friendly workbook offers a "how to" for teachers, principals and district leadership. Educators can use the rubrics and scenarios to evaluate readiness to implement proficiency practices successfully at the teacher and student levels. Administrators will find a wealth of ideas on how to ensure that proficiency-based teaching and learning practices are supported with strategic policies and sustainable resources.

"Unless we can find an educational approach that can unleash the power of our children, we will never find our potential as a nation. *It's About Time* is the beginning of this journey."

Richard DeLorenzo
Re-Inventing Schools Coalition

"This guide provides a common sense outline of the keys to proficiency-driven instruction. A very special feature is that it honors the role of day-to-day classroom assessment FOR learning."

Rick Stiggins
Assessment Consultant

A FRAMEWORK FOR PROFICIENCY-BASED TEACHING & LEARNING

About the Author

Diane Smith is a life-long teacher, beginning her career as a playground monitor in fourth grade. Her 34-year public school experience spans instruction at the elementary, middle, high school and college levels. She is an expert in the fields of curriculum and instruction and has served as a teacher, alternative school principal and Director of Curriculum for the Greater Albany Public School District in Albany, Oregon. Diane is the Business Education Compact's Director of the Teaching & Learning Initiative.

About the Business Education Compact

The BEC is a non-profit organization investing in quality education since 1984. In fulfilling our mission—"Make Learning Real"—we connect students with their future and give teachers tools to create enthusiastic, lifelong learners. Programs include paid internships for high school and college students; National Engineers Month that stimulates student excitement for science and math; and the Teaching & Learning Initiative that is transforming K-12 education and improving student outcomes through proficiency-based teaching and learning.

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